

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 231317Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6801
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E O 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, SY

SUBJECT: INITIAL ISRAELI REACTION TO SYRIAN

DECISION TO EXTEND UNDOF

1. IN INITIAL ISRAELI PRESS REACTION TO SYRIAN
SIX-MONTH EXTENSION OF UNDOF MANDATE, WRITERS
ATTRIBUTE MOVE TO SOVIET PERUSASION, SYRIAN CONCERN
OVER DISPUTE WITH IRAQ, AND/OR SYRIAN DESIRE TO
CARVER OUT POLITICAL POSTURE INDEPENDENT OF EGYPT.
MANY WRITERS POINT OUT THAT SYRIAN DECISION CAUGHT
GOI BY SURPRISE.

2. DAVAR (ESHED), POINTING OUT THAT FOREIGN
MINISTRY HAS THUS FAR REFRAINED FROM FAVORABLE
COMMENT ON THE SYRIAN EXTENSION, SAYS THERE ARE
DIFFERENT VIEWS INJERUSALEM ABOUT REASONS FOR
SYRIAN DECISION, AMONG THEM "THE MORE MODERATE
SOVIET STANCE EVIDENT AT THE KISSINGER-GROMYKO
MEETING" AND FACT THAT "SYRIANS MAY BE TIRED OF
TRAILING BEHIND EGYPTIAN INITIATIVES AND WANT
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TO ASSURE THEMSELVES OF SOME ELBOW ROOM OF THEIR

OWN".

3. MAARIV (SEGEV WASHDC) WRITES THAT IN WASHINGTON ONE HEARS THAT POSSIBLE REASON FOR SYRIAN EXTENSION IS ITS DISPUTE WITH IRAQ, ADDING THAT SYRIA IS SAID TO FEAR AN IRAQI AIR RAID ON ITS EUPHRATES DAM. SEGEV ALSO CITES "WASHINGTON DIPLOMATS" AS BELIEVING THAT SYRIA HAS NOW LEFT EGYPT NO CHOICE BUT TO EXTEND MANDATE OF UNEF ACCORDINGLY. IN ADDITION, ACCORDING TO THESE DIPLOMATS, SADAT WILL FIND IT VERY HARD TO NEGOTIATE AGAIN WITH ISRAEL IN ABSENCE OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL.

4. EDITORIAL IN AL-HAMISHMAR STATES " IT WOULD NOT SURPRISE US IF IT WAS MOSCOW WHICH ADVISED SYRIA TO AGREE TO AN EXTENSION OF THE MANDATE FOR SIX MONTHS". EDITORIAL CAUTIONS THAT EXTENSION SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS TURNING POINT IN SYRIA POLICY, " BUT IT IMPLIES ADJUSTMENT TO PRESENT CONDITIONS". AL-HAMISHMAR BELIEVES ISRAEL SHOULD USE THE TIME NOW AVAILABLE FOR "CLEAR, COURAGEOUS POLITICAL INITIATIVE".

5. FORMER DEFMIN DAYAN MAY 22 ALSO ADDRESSED QUESTION OF SYRIAN EXTENSION OF UNDOF MANDATE IN COURSE OF UNIVERSITY LECTURE. PRESS QUOTES HIM AS SAYING THAT SYRIANS AGREED TO SIX-MONTH EXTENSION "EITHER BECAUSE THEY ARE PREOCCUPIED JUST NOW WITH IRAQ OR BECAUSE THEY WERE PROMISED BY THEIR RUSSIAN FRIENDS THAT THE U.S.-SOVIET JUGGERNAUT WILL PRESENT THEM WITH A POLITICAL GAIN WITHOUT WAR".
VELIOTES

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